



## The University of Texas System

Nine Universities. Six Health Institutions. Unlimited Possibilities.

### Office of the Chancellor

601 Colorado Street, Austin, TX 78701-2982  
Phone: 512-499-4201 Fax: 512-499-4215

March 12, 2013

The Honorable Rick Perry  
Governor of Texas  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 12428  
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Governor Perry:

Since the last legislative session, the nation has experienced new episodes of gun violence that have sharpened national attention on the issue. In that context and as in recent sessions, the 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature is considering legislation relating to the presence of concealed handguns on university campuses. As Chancellor of the state's largest university system, I take this opportunity to express my concerns, as I did during the 82<sup>nd</sup> legislative session.

I respect the legislature's authority to decide this public policy issue, and that neither all legislators nor the Texans they represent will agree. However, during my tenure as Chancellor, parents, students, faculty, staff, administrators, and institutional law enforcement officers have all expressed concern that the presence of concealed handguns on our campuses will make the campus environment less safe.

There is both a general concern about the danger that handguns inherently present, as well as specific concerns. Campus mental health professionals, who regularly face the reality that suicide is a leading cause of death among university students, are concerned that the presence of handguns will lead to an increase in accidental and self-inflicted wounds. Campus law enforcement personnel are particularly concerned about the ability of their officers, each a highly trained professional, to distinguish—in colloquial terms—the good guys from the bad guys on a crowded campus when several persons may have guns visible in an incident. And personnel in our university laboratories and hospitals are concerned about their environments where gases and chemicals under pressure may present unique dangers were a firearm to be discharged.

I acknowledge the great work our police officers perform every day across our university campuses to make them safe. Both supporters and opponents of permitting concealed handguns on university campuses believe their approach will make campuses safer. I believe that, on balance, the permitted presence of concealed weapons will contribute to a less-safe campus environment. I respectfully request that the legislature ensure that all concerns and considerations are weighed as it makes such an important decision, as I am confident it will.

With great respect,

Francisco G. Cigarroa, M.D.  
Chancellor

FGC/jbp

The University of Texas at Arlington  
The University of Texas at Austin  
The University of Texas at Brownsville  
The University of Texas at Dallas  
The University of Texas at El Paso  
The University of Texas – Pan American  
The University of Texas  
of the Permian Basin  
The University of Texas at San Antonio  
The University of Texas at Tyler

The University of Texas  
Southwestern Medical Center  
The University of Texas  
Medical Branch at Galveston  
The University of Texas  
Health Science Center at Houston  
The University of Texas  
Health Science Center at San Antonio  
The University of Texas  
M. D. Anderson Cancer Center  
The University of Texas  
Health Science Center at Tyler

[www.utsystem.edu](http://www.utsystem.edu)